



Welcome to Kindergarten!

Dear Families,

Welcome to kindergarten! It is an exciting year in which children come to school with plenty of energy and a natural desire to learn. These qualities help children make positive adjustments to school. You have been preparing your child for this new experience by answering questions and talking about school.

Here are several additional tips for making your child's initial school experience a successful one:

- Share your positive feelings about school. Your feelings will have a direct effect on how your child feels about school. If you are excited about school, your child will also be excited.
- If your child expresses fears or anxieties about what school will be like, listen carefully and with patience. Talking about fears helps to reduce them.
- Encourage your child to ask questions about school. Informed children are confident children.
- Establish and practice daily routines. A consistent morning routine is important. Decide how you and your child will wake up, have breakfast and get to school on time. By allowing enough time for your morning routine, a stressful morning rush is prevented.
- Decide on a relaxing and consistent evening routine and bedtime. Being well rested is very important. Attending school can be a physically and mentally exhausting experience for many young children. Put your child to bed a little earlier than usual. Most young children need 8-10 hours of sleep. Once a routine is established, adjust bedtime to meet your child's developing needs.
- Practice good health habits with your child. Encourage your child to blow his/her nose, use the toilet independently, and wash his/her hands with little or no assistance from an adult.
- Teach your child independent living skills. Taking care of oneself is a big step towards independence. Help your child learn how to put on his/her coat and shoes and offer opportunities to practice with buttons, snaps & zippers.
- Invite your child to help put his/her name on special school items, such as a lunch box, backpack, towel and sweater. This helps your child take responsibility for his/her own belongings.
- Make sure that your child knows and can say his/her first and last name. These are the names s/he will learn to write at school and use with many people who work in the school, such as the bus driver and the cafeteria worker.
- Explore the use of various school tools. Provide opportunities for your child to use scissors, markers, crayons, pencils, paint, playdough, etc.
- Read with your child regularly. Share your love of books with your child by reading aloud from a wide variety of stories. Afterward, talk with him/her about the story.
- Familiarize your child with his/her new school surroundings by visiting the school as well as attending any orientation that may be offered to you and your child. Also, help your child have a clear understanding of how s/he is to get to and from school each day.

Kindergarten may or may not be your child's first socialization experience. If your child has not had many experiences in a regular group social setting, provide a variety of opportunities that encourage social time with other children of the same age. These might include: story time at the library, camps, summer enrichment classes, vacation Bible school, Sunday school classes, neighborhood social activities and play dates with friends.

Kindergarten is an enjoyable learning time for you and your child. Both academic and social development are important aspects of a kindergartner's growth. The suggestions offered here are meant to help you and your child make the transition to kindergarten as smooth as possible.

Here's to a terrific school beginning!

